

Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-10 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-14 USIA-04 SCCT-01

SY-02 NIC-01 OMB-01 A-01 SCA-01 AID-05 DRC-01 /070 W

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R 091306Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8404

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

DIA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7519

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, AR

SUBJECT: POLICE ACTION AGAINST LEFTIST TERRORISTS HAVING SOME SUCCESS

REF BA 7373

1. SUMMARY. THE NUMBER OF LEFTISTS LEAVING ARGENTINA UNDER THE THREAT OF RIGHT WING TERRORIST ACTION GROWS DAILY AS DOES THE NUMBER OF ARMY OFFICERS ASSASSINATED BY THE ERP. THE POLICE APPEAR TO BE CONDUCTING A VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN AGAINST LEFTIST TERRORISM AND ARE HAVING SOME SUCCESS. END SUMMARY

2. FORMER INTERIOR MINISTER ESTEBAN RIGHI HAS BECOME ANOTHER OF THE GROWING NUMBER OF ARGENTINE LEFTISTS WHO HAVE DEPARTED THE COUNTRY FEARING ASSASSINATION BY RIGHT WING TERRORISTS. HE DEPARTED BUENOS AIRES FOR MEXICO ON OCT 3, APPARENTLY AFTER HAVING BEEN A "HOUSE GUEST" (RATHER THAN AN ASYLEE) IN THE MEXICAN EMBASSY. RIGHI'S EXIT HAD VERY LITTLE PLAY IN LOCAL PRESS UNLIKE THE LAGUZZI AND PUIGGROS CASES (SEE BA 7316).

3. ALSO GOING INTO EXILE ON OCT 3 WERE FEDERICO AND BERNARDO
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TROXLER. THE TWO ARE BROTHER OF JULIO TROXLER WHO WAS MURDERED

BY THE ARGENTINE ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLIANCE (AAA) ON SEP 20.
A FORMER BISHOP, JERONIMO PODESTA, IS ALSO AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE
DEPARTED THE COUNTRY UNDER THREAT.

4. THIS LIST IS BY NO MEANS EXHAUSTIVE. PRACTICALLY ALL THE
ENTERTAINERS AND SOME JOURNALISTS WHO WERE DEATH LISTED HAVE
LEFT. THE EMBASSY IS ALSO AWARE OF OTHER PENDING DEPARTURES.

5. THE AAA IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION IN THE SAME SENSE THAT
LEFTIST TERRORIST GROUPS ARE. IT INSTEAD APPEARS TO BE A
LOOSE COLLECTION OF DEATH SQUADS ACTING EITHER ON ORDERS
FROM ABOVE OR IN A VIGILANTE STYLE. FOR THIS REASON, IT IS
ALL BUT IMPOSSIBLE TO AUTHENTICATE THE THREATS OR DEATH LISTS
THAT HAVE REPORTEDLY APPEARED. THERE IS LITTLE IF ANY DOUBT
BUT THAT ELEMENTS OF BOTH SIDE AND THE FEDERAL POLICE ARE
INVOLVED IN THE AAA AND THAT SOME GOVERNMENT COLLUSION, OR
AT LEAST TOLERANCE, REACHES TO THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL. HENCE,
MOST PEOPLE ARE TAKING VERY SERIOUSLY ANY THREAT EMANATING
FROM THE AAA.

6. DESPITE ITS OFFER TO THE GOA OF AN ARMISTICE (SEE FBIS)
THE ERP CONTINUED ITS CAMPAIGN TO INDISCRIMINATELY KILL 14
TO 16 ARMY OFFICERS. MAJOR JAIME GIMENO BECAME THE FOURTH
OFFICER TO BE MURDERED WHEN HE WAS KILLED ON OCT 7 IN A BA SUBURB.
HIS SON SHOT AND KILLED 2 OF THE ASSASSINS WHILE WOUNDING ANOTHER.
THE ERP ARMISTICE OFFER REPORTEDLY WAS CIRCULATED TO EACH OF THE
REPRESENTATIVES WHO WERE TO ATTEND TODAY'S NATIONAL UNITY MEETING.
THIS WAS DOUBTLESS A PUBLIC RELATIONS MOVE ON ERP'S PART AIMED
AT SHOWING THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO BE REASONABLE EVEN IF
THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT.

7. POLICE ARE OBVIOUSLY ANXIOUS TO SHOW RESULTS IN THEIR EFFORTS
TO COMBAT TERRORISM AND ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO THE MURDERED
ARMY OFFICERS. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MEMORY SINCE THE PERONISTS
TOOK OVER
LAST YEAR THE NAMES OF POLITICAL ASSASSINS HAVE BEEN
MADE KNOWN PUBLICLY. THE POLICE HAVE ALLEGEDLY IDENTIFIED
THREE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING CAPT PAIVA ON OCT 2
IN BA. HOWEVER, THE ARMY IS NOT CERTAIN THAT THOSE IDENTIFIED
BY THE POLICE ARE REALLY CULPABLE SINCE THEY ARE EXPERIENCED
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GUERRILLAS. ACCORDING TO THE ARMY, THESE KILLINGS ARE BEING CARRIED
OUT SOLELY BY RECENT GUERRILLA RECRUITS--A HYPOTHESIS SUPPORTED BY
THE RELATIVELY HIGH NUMBER OF FAILURES IN THESE ATTEMPTS.
NEVERTHELESS, THE POLICE ARE STILL CONDUCTING EXTENSIVE ANTITERRORIST
OPERATIONS AND APPARENTLY HAVE HAD SOME SUCCESSES. THEY
ANNOUNCED ON OCT 7 THAT 670 SEARCHES WERE CONDUCTED WITH 138
PEOPLE ARRESTED. CAPTURED ARMS AND OTHER MATERIAL WERE DISPLAYED.

8. COMMENT. THE ERP'S ARMISTICE OFFER RECEIVED VERY LITTLE PRESS COVERAGE AS THE NEWSPAPERS CONTINUE TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS IN COVERING THE TERRORIST QUESTION IN VIEW OF THE SANCTIONS PROVIDED UNDER THE NEW ANTI-SUBVERSION LAW. THE GOA HAS YET TO ISSUE GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ON TERRORISM UNDER THIS LAW BUT IS REPORTEDLY STUDYING IT. THE ERP OFFER DID NOT EVEN MERIT MENTION IN MRS PERON'S ADDRESS TO THE OCT 8 MULTI PARTY MEETING. THE ERP OBVIOUSLY MADE THE OFFER FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PURPOSES AND WITH THE FULL EXPECTATION THAT IT WOULD BE REJECTED BY THE GOVERNMENT. SOME HAVE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE OFFER INDICATES THE ERP IS BEGINNING TO HURT, BUT THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
HILL

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